

### 1. *What is a statewide longitudinal data system (MSLDS)?*

An MSLDS has various meanings to different people. Generally, the MSLDS is a system made up of many variables that allow for data connectivity, analysis and reporting over time. Applications are designed in ways that facilitate links for connecting data. These applications contain interoperable frameworks for data exchange (e.g., common definitions, structures and timing). The MSLDS will incorporate query capabilities for analyzing data, predicting impacts of variables and providing decision support models.

### 2. *Why is Michigan creating an MSLDS?*

Michigan's Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) is building a statewide longitudinal data system (MSLDS) to support Governor Granholm's agenda to double the number of Michigan residents who obtain postsecondary credentials and degrees and to meet several federal mandates. Significant resources have been invested in the collection of student, staff, facility and financial data that describe pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade (PK-12) education systems and participants. CEPI has been tasked with including postsecondary, adult learner and workforce data to the MSLDS to broaden the data connection of Michigan's students.

Public sources (e.g., *The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, the U.S. Department of Education Longitudinal Data Systems Grants of 2006 and 2009, the Lieutenant Governor Cherry's Commission on Higher Education and Economic Growth, and the America Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009) and private sources (e.g., the Data Quality Campaign and the State Higher Education Executive Officers) of funding are now beginning to require recipients to track longitudinal "results" (e.g., accountability and impact on student outcomes).

### 3. *Where are the funds for the creation of the MSLDS coming from?*

A portion of the funding for this project comes from the U.S. Department of Education (USED) National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (MSLDS) Grants awarded to Michigan in 2006, 2009 and 2010.

The first grant required CEPI to build the capacity to connect PK-12 to postsecondary data by upgrading the current student data system. The second grant compelled CEPI to move beyond capacity building to create a prototype for data analysis and reporting using a functional MSLDS of data marts and analysis tools. The third grant is to accelerate the building of the MSLDS in a manner that will allow timely compliance with the provisions of the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund. Specifically, the 2010 grant will enable CEPI to make the information more accessible, enhance instructional connections, increase data system linkages and provide stronger analytics.

### 4. *What is the MSLDS timeline and proposed phases?*

Michigan is required to have a fully-functional MSLDS by September 2011. Although an MSLDS is never truly "finished," the project is planned to be developed and implemented in three phases. In all three phases, processes will involve: 1) database development, 2) development of data store and foundation tables, 3) cleaning and transforming the data, 4) loading the cleansed data into an analytical data store, and 5) development of queries and stored procedures to develop data extracts and reports. The general differences between the three phases are among the data extraction processes from the following systems:

#### Phase 1

- Michigan Student Data System (MSDS)
- Educational Entity Master (EEM)
- Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability (OEAA) Databases

## Phase 2

- Docufide Michigan e-Transcripts Initiative Repositories (Postsecondary and high school data)
- National Student Clearinghouse Data (Postsecondary data)
- Registry of Educational Personnel (REP)
- Financial Information Database (FID)

## Phase 3

- School Infrastructure Database (SID)
- Michigan Adult Education Reporting System (MAERS)
- Michigan Compliance Information System (MI-CIS)
- Career and Technical Education Information System (CTEIS)
- Michigan Electronic Grant System (MEGS)
- Migrant Education Data System (MEDS)

### **5. *What data sources will be included in the MSLDS?***

There are 13 systems/applications that generate data feeding the MSLDS. CEPI has completed a thorough consideration of these systems/applications in partnership with those state agency stakeholders involved. The agencies involved include the Department of Technology, Management and Budget (DTMB), the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), the Michigan Department of Treasury (MDT) and the Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Growth (DELEG).

### **6. *What is the goal of the MSLDS in terms of reporting needs?***

The MSLDS is not intended to directly fulfill agency reporting needs. Users of the data will still be responsible for their reporting obligations. The MSLDS is being developed to connect data elements from various independent data systems/applications to aid users for the purposes of creating reports and analyzing data. The MSLDS will become an invaluable tool for users to acquire the necessary data for certain reporting needs that perhaps was labor intensive or time consuming previously.

Ultimately, the broader goal of the MSLDS is to be a source of multifaceted data for various users to access to support decisions and to inform policy. Just how these data connections can be used to improve policies and outcomes for students will require focused efforts at the state, within the districts, and across the academic and private research continuum. The creation of the MSLDS proposes to strengthen relationships with regional data initiatives, to support the state research collaborative, and to build internal capacity to support analysis and research efforts. Through collaboration and the use of collective capacity at state and regional research institutions, the state can begin to foster a more robust analytic capacity to drive change.

### **7. *Will there be a governance/advisory group for the MSLDS?***

Yes. The various groups proposed are:

- a) P-20 Advisory Council – The governor will be issuing an executive order making this official. The group will recommend policy items for review by CEPI and MDE, will help establish model data-sharing agreements and memorandums of understanding, and will inform CEPI of policy implications for various MSLDS data items being used for longitudinal analysis. It will also recommend research questions and policy issues to be addressed via the MSLDS.
- b) PK-12 Data Work Group – This group will be focused on implementation challenges and issues that arise in the course of establishing an MSLDS. The focus will be on its area of expertise (PK-12) with effort devoted to identifying and overcoming challenges related to linking data sets to postsecondary and workforce records. This group will analyze issues brought up by the P-20 Advisory Council, recommend strategies for addressing them and implement approaches for accomplishing the work.
- c) Adult Learner Data Work Group – This group will be focused on implementation challenges and issues aligned with adult learners and the workforce as the state works to address issues driven by the P-20 Advisory Council. This group will work on data exchange issues between institutions of higher education, the adult education community and the state.

- d) Research Collaborative – Michigan’s state-level research collaborative will assemble researchers from across the state and the Midwest region to collaborate on and contribute to the development of a research agenda targeting needs recommended by the P-20 Advisory Council. This group will enable the organization of a broad research capacity to address state education policy questions in a more coherent fashion. This state-level research collaborative will oversee several key data tasks: 1) work with the P-20 Advisory Council to set and prioritize a state research agenda, 2) ensure that student, school and system performance are measured meaningfully, 3) build the technical and human capacity to use the data effectively in local education agencies, by research audiences and centrally, 4) review research proposals requiring state data, regardless of funding source, 5) establish guidelines and standards for proposal submission with data requests, and 6) make appropriate research results available to the public through the state’s education data portal.

**8. *Will CEPI be creating the MSLDS?***

CEPI has a key role in overseeing the development and maintenance of the MSLDS. CEPI created a request for proposal (RFP), which will be released in spring 2010. The RFP seeks a vendor who can create the MSLDS in the timeframe and method proposed by CEPI and key stakeholders.

**9. *How does Docufide and the Michigan e-Transcript Initiative fit into the MSLDS picture?***

Michigan has partnered with Docufide to implement an electronic transcript initiative throughout the state, allowing school districts to transmit student transcripts electronically to postsecondary institutions and to a transcript repository hosted at Docufide. Docufide also hosts a process by which postsecondary institutions can transmit student-level data to a data repository. At this time this data repository is the primary mechanism for collecting and reporting on postsecondary measures as defined by the America Competes Act. A milestone of Phase 2 of this project will be to extract selected K-12 and postsecondary transcript data elements from the data repository to store and report from the state-hosted MSLDS.